



Courtesy Photo

REAL CLASS—Professor Lynn Lyman (second row, far right) and her U.S. Government and Politics class at RCC met with Gov. Deval Patrick (center front) at Dunkin' Donuts in Grove Hall on April 10.

ENHANCED, FREE INTERNET SERVICE COMES TO RCC

FreeFi Networks (www.freefi-net.com), a Los Angeles-based company offering content and advertiser supported Internet access, recently announced the launch of upgraded Wi-Fi service at Roxbury Community College (RCC). The launch brings a newly installed and enhanced Internet experience to students, faculty and staff of the college.

The "FreeFi University" proto-

type was a concept tested at Bentley College during 2007, and then customized for RCC with specific educational, social and entertainment content to create a unique experience for the college.

FreeFi and RCC are partnering with Microsoft, Hewlett Packard and Experience.com to increase the coverage and the speed of the current Wi-Fi offering to over 4 times and at the same time have

created a loaner laptop program, enhanced career service access and direct access to the MDSN Academic Alliance and Microsoft IT academy. The ultimate goal is to create a state-of-the-art technology offering at RCC that is also financially self sustaining.

"There are currently one billion people with internet access

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RCC ATHLETES EARN POST-SEASON HONORS

By Erin Harper

Roxbury Community College (RCC) freshman forward Ashley Murchison and freshman center Quinton Wilson are the school's latest student-athletes to earn praise of their performances on the basketball court. Murchison was named to the National Junior College Athletic Association's (NJCAA) Region XXI Second Team, and Wilson was an Honorable Mention.

Murchison, a former Burke High School standout from Dorchester, finished the season leading the country in rebounding, averaging 18.3 per contest. In 18 games, she also notched 17.4 points per game. Wilson, a Kingstree, S.C., native, finished his season averaging 10.9 points and 7.5 rebounds per game.

"This accomplishment is a true reflection of my team's accomplishments this season," said Murchison.

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CORRECTIONAL PROGRAM WON'T BE HOUSED HERE

By Najya Mawasi

Although the Suffolk County Trial Court proposed housing a women's correctional program at Roxbury Community College (RCC) beginning next fall, President Terrence Gomes has decided against it, it was announced on April 22.

Gomes told a committee of the Student Government Association (SGA) that it isn't going to happen, according to SGA member Omar Larrama. The decision was announced to faculty the same week.

The proposal to put the Opted Out program at RCC caused much discussion on campus since March. Many students, faculty and staff members got together to voice their concerns. If RCC's administration had decided to provide space for the program, RCC would have been the first community college in Massachusetts to have a women's correctional program within its walls.

Opted Out, according to written materials, is a program of the Massachusetts Trial Court Office of Community Correc-

tions that offers women offenders ages 17-45 who have substance abuse problems an opportunity to change their lives. The program would operate during the day and extend into the evening for women who work during the day. The goal of the program is to promote public safety by implementing a curriculum that offers life management services including relapse prevention, community service, job readiness, stress management, etiquette and ethics and other basics that prepare them to integrate back into communities throughout Boston.

The program was asking RCC to rent the third floor of the Student Center (Building 4), which would have been renovated to accommodate Opted Out. The court would have assumed all financial responsibility for renovations and, as an incentive, the college would have received a "substantial" amount of money in rent, Alane Shanks, RCC's vice president of administration and finance, said in an interview last month.

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Photo by Milton Samuels

ALL THIS JAZZ—The RCC Jazz Ensemble, and Frank Wilkins & Friends with Jose Alicea and Lance Houston, performed recently sponsored by RCC Student Activities.

HAPPENINGS ON CAMPUS . . .

On March 26, Prof. Neil Callender (English), along with Elizabeth Clark (Director of Student Activities) and Prof. Judy Kahalas (Coordinator of the Writing Center), co-hosted the first of a Black Poet Series in the cafeteria. The first event featured former National Slam Poetry Champion Regie Gibson, who is also a noted songwriter, author and educator. Gibson read from a variety of his published work. After the pre-

sentation, Gibson took questions from the audience and spoke about his art and how it is influenced by life. Haitian poet Jacques Fleury read on April 16 in the cafeteria.

On March 27, the Centers for Academic Support held a joint Open House, Sprint to Success, to showcase their individual centers and how these can support student success. Students enjoyed refreshments as they progressed

from The Learning Center (Room 207) to the Language Lab (Room 205) to the Writing Center (Room 203) and onto the Math Clinic (Room 506). The labs had handouts, presentations, contests, and prizes.

On March 31, Prof. Mark Garth, Dean of Student Success, hosted a Major Event at the cafeteria. Students were invited to peruse various tables and learn about academic programs and student support services. Representatives from various academic disciplines as well as student services were available to discuss options with students. The event was held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and again from 5 to 6 p.m.. Refreshments, door prizes and raffles drew students to this very successful event.

On April 4, many faculty and staff attended the Teaching, Learning, and Student Development Conference at North Shore Community College. The following RCC people presented: Dr. Brenda Mercomes and Prof. Sterling Giles; Professors Judy Kahalas, Susan Kalt and Craig Zaehring and Dean Nancy Teel; and Deans David Becker and Jenene Cook.

On April 17 and 14, Career Services hosted two Career Fairs for RCC



Photo by Milton Samuels

WORD SLAM—Poet Regie Gibson, one-time National Slam Poetry Champion, reads from his work on March 26 as part of the Black Poetry Series.

Students and Alumni. Nursing & Allied Health was Monday, April 7, and General (All Majors) was Monday, April 14.

Sixteen employers and over 50 students participated in the Nursing & Allied Health Career Fair. Thirty-three employers and over 100 students participated in the General (All Majors) Career Fair.

On April 14, RCC faculty and staff gathered at The Milky Way Lounge and Lanes in Hyde Square, Jamaica Plain for their annual Bowl-a-thon,

Bowl for Books, to raise funds for students who cannot afford to buy required texts. Prizes were given to Dr. Kyriss Rodriguez (Science), who got the highest score and the most pledges. Milt Samuels (Marketing) and Colleen Spence (Director of The Learning Center) celebrated their birthdays with their colleagues, and an auction was held..

On April 16, Leona Lion from the WGBH-TV series “Between the Lions” visited Little Sprouts Child Enrichment Center at RCC.



Photo by Milton Samuels

MAJOR EVENT—Professor Souliy Wan-n'Tani, Coordinator of Criminal Justice, greets students at Majors Monday on March 31.

DCE PROGRAM OFFERS CLASSES FOR CAREERS

BY BRITTANY FERNANDES

When most people think of Roxbury Community College (RCC) they think of a convenient college for the community—a place where new dreams are developed for the young and the old and those who want a second chance at success.

But, also, RCC’s website offers a link entitled “Department of Continuing Education (DCE) workforce development” about a program that is especially dedicated to those who want to have specialized skills in specific career areas such as: medical, real estate, retail, pharmacy and computers, just to name a few. The program also offers classes for teens still in high school who may want to be prepared for the excursion to college. So far, many people have taken advantage of the many classes offered.

The website, <http://www.rcc.mass.edu/DCE/Mission.htm>, says: “Roxbury Community College offers quality post-secondary, workforce development, and higher education learning opportunities in the liberal arts and sciences,

career and transfer programs, private and public sector training, and developmental academic skills. Roxbury Community College grants associate degrees and certificates, affording its students a solid foundation for college transfer, employment, professional advancement, personal enrichment, and lifelong learning.”

Nefertiti Francis, who was in the DCE workforce development class of 2007, said in an interview, “Medical encoding class was not only easy but also a huge convenience as far as my agenda goes. Ascertaining the knowledge I did from the medical encoding class allowed me to get a good-paying job in the medical coding field while I finish nursing school.”

Francis said she truly feels that having this class under her belt has been great, and that the classes weren’t very long. Though some of these classes aren’t credited as college classes, they still can help a person get closer to landing a stable job or career or just get some useful information.

The writer is a journalism student at RCC.

DOZENS OF KIDS FIND EGGS

BY JAMES MCGRUDER

The first annual Easter egg hunt hosted by Roxbury Community College’s (RCC’s) Video and Audio Club was a hit. Held on the Saturday before Easter, the hunt was held inside and in front of the Academic Building

(#3). Around 30 kids between ages 1 and 9 hunted and made their own Easter eggs.

Five members of the Video and Audio Club, one of whom is a member of the Student Government Association, helped out. Faculty member and club adviser Justin Petty came out and

showed support for the hunt. He thanked Denise Badgett for putting up the funds for the hunt. Chaia McGruder-Jones, 8, and a relative of this writer, said, “I can’t wait for next year’s hunt.”

The writer is a journalism student at RCC.

— ASK THE GRAMMARIAN —

Dear Reader,

In the Fall issue of The Gazette, you asked me to explain to you what it means to be copious. Your teacher was perhaps trying to tell you to be brief. Do not repeat yourself. Say what you want to say in as few words as possible.

To belabor your point is to risk boring your reader—or even insulting his or her intelligence. The grammatical name for copiousness is PLEONASM. When we can remove words without altering the meaning of the sentence,

it is an indication of the occurrence of pleonasm. Biblical text is replete with pleonasm.

The following are examples of words and formulaic phrases used pleonastically:

“...and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters...” (Genesis 1:2)

I remember when I was a little tiny boy.

I saw the lion; I saw it with my own eyes.

His exit was so inaudible and noise-

less that no one took notice.

In the first example, “face” can be substituted for “surface.” The word “surface” then becomes a figure of substitution rather than addition.

The close connection that exists between the two figures is what makes it sometimes difficult to determine if a word is a pleonasm or not.

Therefore, when a writer says essentially the same thing in different words, he or she is said to be copious. One technique of avoiding copiousness or pleonasm is careful editing and revision. My advice to you is to edit and revise your paper, watching out for sentences where you may have used two words simultaneously to mean the same thing or where you have been verbose—using too much unnecessary verbiage or superfluity of diction in proportion to the content of your essay.

Please send your Grammatical Questions to Ask the Grammarian in care of the Gateway Gazette, jkahalas@rcc.mass.edu.

RCC ATHLETES

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“It’s a personal steppingstone for me, and has helped to enhance my confidence.”

Athletic Director Keith McDermott lauded the pair for their hard work.

“Ashley and Quinton both had outstanding seasons as members of the RCC basketball program,”

said McDermott. “It’s terrific that they’ve been rewarded for their hard work and dedication.”

The RCC Lady Tigers finished their regular season with a 10-8 record, earning them a spot in the Massachusetts State Tournament.

The writer is Sports Information Director for the Reggie Lewis Center and RCC Athletics.

A CONVERSATION ON STUDENT SUCCESS AT RCC

BY STERLING GILES

In early January 2008, before classes began, 35 full- and part-time teachers attended the Roxbury Community College (RCC) Faculty Academy, a day of professional activities beyond the classroom. These Academies are held periodically at the College. Faculty who choose to attend are paid a small stipend to participate in a variety of activities, which often include workshops on teaching methods, refining the curriculum of particular courses, and discussions among teachers in a particular area, or between areas for better coordination, as well as discussions of other academic issues. It is an opportunity for teachers to connect in a more reflective manner, when they are not so busy with classes, office hours and meetings. It is also an opportunity for full-time and adjunct teachers to come together for substantive discussions, since many part-time faculty are less able to take part in these discussions during the semester, when they are rushing off to other jobs.

This January's academy was shorter than most, just one day, and it had a particular focus on Achieving the Dream and RCC's involvement with this national initiative to help community colleges improve the ways they serve students. The day included seven different sessions; this report is on one that took place in the afternoon, on the topic of student success.

Kinds of success

The question was, "How do we define student success, and what does this say about the core values of the College?" We all recognized the validity of mandated definitions such as graduation rate, grades, and persistence (staying in school), but we spent most of our time discussing other ways that we think it's important to think about success, some of which are harder to measure or not recognized in official reports. We think these other measures are important, so we defined success in these ways,

too.

A student is successful if s/he knows more upon leaving than when s/he came, if the College's and the student's engagement have added value. Success is the ability to move towards a solution to a problem—not necessarily to even solve the problem, but to know how to get started. This last point led to a discussion of the AP grade (only for pre-100 level courses), given when a student is not ready for the next level, but has worked hard and made progress in a course. That's success. AP is not a passing grade, but it's not a failure either. It means you need more time, but you are moving forward. We all recognize that having courses with a single pace is a necessary compromise in a college system, but that it can never properly meet the needs of students who find themselves with different prior knowledge and on different points along the path of spurts and plateaus that are natural in any learning process. We need to keep asking ourselves whether repeating a course is a failure or part of the path to success. Everyone agreed that finishing what you start makes you a success, no matter how long it takes.

Others felt that success is the maturity to meet challenges and define the next learning step, with the executive skills to organize the aspects of one's life and learning. Our on-campus research data indicate students believe that when they failed it was because they didn't work hard enough, either because of lack of commitment or because other things in life got in the way. Students who have failed rarely blame the College or faculty, a fact that heartened and mobilized faculty in this discussion. Faculty agreed that it's too easy to say, "Life is complicated. What can we do?" Although students' need to work, care for family, and meet other commitments is a real obstacle, we must continue to look for ways, even small ones, to make a difference with this particular challenge to student success. Teachers asked, "When can we say

that we have fulfilled our obligations to the student?" There is no simple answer, but it certainly does not end with covering the course content.

"Every successful student is an ambassador for RCC." This statement from one faculty member got us thinking about the mission of the College. At the College's inception, one goal was to train future leaders, who in turn would help underrepresented groups participate in civic life. The College was to build a more effectively engaged citizenship, and have a liberating effect on the oppressed. The College's success could be measured by seeing how many of our graduates worked for community agencies, in government, or by how many wrote letters to the editor. Of course we still maintain a variety of goals, but as the balance has shifted over the years from a reflective liberal arts education to job training, with more certificates and A.S. degrees, and more majors in those areas, we wonder if we aren't losing sight of this original goal. These changes are largely a response to student

needs and expressed desires; after all, they choose the majors. But to the extent that we exercise leadership we have to ask ourselves if we are serving the needs of the community. How big is the C in our community college?

Service learning

It's appropriate that the Faculty Academy's second focus was service learning, which provides an opportunity to connect students with the community in meaningful contexts through their courses. We must continue to embed into the curriculum, whenever appropriate to the course content, and in as many ways as we can discover, opportunities to relate knowledge and skills to community involvement, and thus give greater depth of meaning to the public part of public education.

One purpose for this discussion was to explore the core values of the College, not as expressed in the Mission Statement or other official documents, but as they exist simply in the hearts and minds of stakeholders. The faculty is only one group, and a full definition would need to include students,

staff, the community, and administrators, but as a partial definition of student success three ideas emerged as key elements: progress towards a goal, realistic and effective life management, and civic engagement.

As a final note, we returned to the admittedly necessary measures of success that we are given as a public institution, and we realized how great is the need to adjust and supplement them. Their inadequacy indicates a lack of awareness of the realities of community colleges; there is a need to educate policy makers. We are not less than, but much more than, the first two years of a four-year school. We hope that whoever is in a position to do so—administrators, union leaders, trustees, or any member of the college community who interacts with decision-makers beyond the campus—will help inform people what a community college is, and particularly what Roxbury Community College is.

The writer is Professor of ESOL and the Coordinator of the Achieving the Dream initiative at RCC.

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Faculty advisors: Judith Kahalas and Sandra Storey

Student staff includes Adler Fedestin, Brittany Fernandes, Najya Mawasi and James McGruder..

OPINION

One meaningful word: Offensive or reconciling?

BY EARL INGRAM

Sliding into a seat, I look about the bus for a face I know. The bus is crowded this morning. I smile at familiar faces, familiar yet not known. Isn't it amazing how we can see the same people on public transportation every day for months, even years and never speak?

Loud voices draw me to a conversation in the rear of the bus. A Cape Verdean woman is speaking to a Hispanic man. Her sentences are punctuated with the word nigga here and there. The word sounds foreign coming out of her heavily accented mouth. I stare. She catches me in her sight and stumbles over her words. Perhaps my disgust is written across my face. I smirk and swallow comments that would have to be yelled across several rows of people to be heard by the offensive woman. Again, my senses are confronted by a non-African-American but clearly colored person, using the word nigga in their conversation. I wonder if she knows the history of the word that slips so easily from her lips. Once more my mind tries to make sense of it all.

African-Americans share a history of enslavement with Cape Verdeans, West Indians and South Americans. We are brothers and sisters born from mother Africa and spread across the globe by colonial Europeans. My mind queries, does this give this woman or any other person who is not African-American but is of African descent the right to use this word nigga? I tend to want to rush in and snatch it from non-African-American mouths. My people have suffered this word for hundreds of years. It is only recently that we have taken the word nigger from its previous owners, stripping it of its degrading value and transforming it

into a word (nigga) of brotherhood to remind us of where we have been and the distance we have yet to go. Granted, there are quite a few of us who believe that nigga has no place in anyone's vocabulary regardless of race. Yet I wonder, why do all people of color choose to use this word.

I have heard many different peoples of color use the word nigga as easily as one uses the word brother. I want to get in their minds to understand why. Do they feel a kinship to African-Americans? Do they understand the strangling oppression African-Americans have and at times still do face? Or did they learn the word from rap music? Is it a fad to them? That thought angers me. Being African American, a survivor of slavery, a soldier battling against racism and prejudice, is not a fad. We are a nation within a nation. You cannot just change your vocabulary and wardrobe and become African-American. I struggle to understand.

Do other African-Americans, upon hearing a non-African-American use the word nigga, feel offended as I do? When I hear it, I usually say something. I cannot just sit there and not say anything. I have not heard anyone else in public reprimand the use of the word nigger by non-African-Americans, except if the person was white. Although, I have seen many looks of disgust. When confronted with that situation, I usually tell the offensive person that they should not use that word. Then I explain that when used by a person who is not African-American, the word nigger is offensive and degrading and gives rise to anger and mistrust. I go on to say when African-Americans use that word among ourselves, it has an entirely different meaning and effect. I also ask them if they would like me to use a word that is offensive to their race in my

speech. Usually the person says that they understand. Sometimes they are offended that I am offended. Their argument is that it is used in our music and language everyday. I point out that as they have said, it is "our" music and "our" language, not theirs. That statement usually ends the conversation. At that point, I should feel better, but I don't. I am left with nagging questions and a heavy heart.

During colonial days, enslaved Africans were referred to by different names depending on what country they were in. Here in America, many words were used to refer to African slaves. Nigger was only one of them. I do not know how Cape Verdean, South American or West Indian slaves were referred to during that time. Perhaps, they were referred to as niggers also and that is why they feel they have some right to its use. I do not know. I also do not know why Hispanics use the word nigger. I do know that Hispanics have also had to deal with the oppressive European. Perhaps the view is taken by all people of color that we're all niggas to white men. Perhaps, this view of our world is working to unite people of color. Maybe people of color in America have come to realize that the plight of America's descendents of slaves is the plight of all peoples of color in America. Possibly, the use of the word nigga among African-Americans opened the minds of people of color allowing them to explore the ties in our heritage that bind us together. This may very well be the first steppingstone to uniting all the descendents of those men and women stolen from Africa so long ago. If that is the case, we have taken the word nigger and truly made it our own.

The writer composed this as part of his RCC journalism class.

College would lose community if facility moved in

BY ADLER FEDESTIN

Opinions expressed this spring about having a women's correctional facility on the Roxbury Community College (RCC) campus have been pretty much the same: "I'm all for people getting a second chance, but on this campus, I'm not sure." Second chances aren't always a given, and we as a society realize that. People are destined to make mistakes—some big and some bad—but ultimately and hopefully people grow from their mistakes. When I think of the correctional facility, I think of people who have made major mistakes in their lives and are given a second chance. Whether that chance is deserved or not is up for debate, but the

chance is given, and the opportunity for growth is not debatable.

I have heard many people at RCC angrily voice their opinions on this matter without giving it a second thought. The collective thought is about the hit the school would take. Word would go out, and the publicity would be far from positive, surely. Who truly wants to be known as being connected to the community college/correctional facility? Yes, the facility would take up only one floor of one building, but who do you know who reads the guidelines? Furthermore, RCC would be known as Roxbury Community College/Correctional Facility. Though the proposed correctional program doesn't seem like it is going to go through,

the question must be asked, why was this proposal seriously considered? Is the school doing so poorly financially that it would risk reputation for financial gain?

Colleges are built on reputation, and sharing room with a correctional facility would damage this school's reputation. Potential students would be possibly turned off and directed to other schools. I understand that the school stands to make money from this idea, but is it worth it in the end? It's understood that this is a community college with its sole purpose serving the community, but the college stands to lose most of the community if it takes this action.

The writer is an RCC journalism student.

INTERNET SERVICE

Continued from page 1

in the world, and that number is growing every day," noted Richard Bogen, managing director of FreeFi Networks. "This alliance adds to that number by providing all students at RCC with free Wi-Fi internet access as a key enabler to help prepare them to compete and participate in the global economy."

FreeFi Networks, in conjunction with its technology partner Front Porch, has created a custom persistent RCC custom sidebar, so that the school can place social, educational and promotional content at the students' fingertips.

RCC is the first member of a five-school pilot partnership with Microsoft to evaluate the impact created by combining ubiquitous internet access with education-enhancing resources for all students. Microsoft's core student resources, MSDN AA and IT Academy, will be integrated into the FreeFi University experience. MSDN Academic Alliance provides students with free access to technical tools for uses such as development, project management or web design while Microsoft IT Academy allows students to obtain in-depth

training.

This powerful combination delivered over FreeFi's network directly to students enables them to get the hands-on skills and practice that they need to succeed in today's technology careers. In addition, students can earn certification on a number of Microsoft applications through this program.

Working with Experience.com, the first web-based college recruiting platform, students can connect directly with thousands of information technology (IT) career opportunities. Through the Experience.com network, Microsoft's community of 10,000 partner companies can easily post jobs or internships and find Microsoft-certified personnel that match their IT work-force needs.

"While the digital experience divide is typically viewed as a global issue, it also affects Americans of diverse backgrounds here," said Terrence Gomes, President of RCC. "FreeFi Networks is helping to close this divide by providing its services to students that may otherwise not have access."

FreeFi Networks is available at RCC's main buildings and will expand to the whole campus over time.

From press materials.

CORRECTIONAL PROGRAM

Continued from page 1

The money received from rent, estimated by others to be approximately \$80,000 annually, would have gone toward providing better services for RCC students and staff, she said.

Over the past several months, students and staff convened meetings on campus to voice their concerns and gather more information. Many students said they are supportive of the women's program, but not at RCC. Some students said they feared the reputation of the college would be diminished.

"I believe the correctional facility will cause our credibility to be affected," said Shawn, a student at RCC who asked that his last name not be used. "Once a college's credibility goes down, it will be harder for students to transfer to a four-year institution. This action will stigmatize RCC, put it in a negative light, and it will consequently derail our mission statement 'Gateway to the Dream.'"

"We are working hard to improve our reputation," said Shanks. She added that the administration's consideration of the program was just not because of finances. "It's not around desperation. It's around strength," she said.

Not only students had reservations. On March 11, the faculty assembly voted on whether the

correctional program should be located at RCC. Twenty-six voted against, and 8 abstained.

On March 21, the SGA and RCC board members went to the Suffolk Trial Court to see the program in operation.

Members of the Human Conduct and Values class taught by Professor A. Aiya-Oba discussed the issue recently, before the president's decision was known.

Student Chris MacNeil said, "I believe a major problem with our country is that our correctional system is based more on punishment and not on rehabilitation. I think everyone deserves second chances. That is why I support the women's correctional program coming to RCC."

But A.B. Delveax said he sees both sides. "There's pros and cons. We are a community college, and we're supposed to help our community. But I also think that there are other facilities the program could utilize besides our college campus."

Chidinma, who didn't want her last name used, said, "It's a good idea to rehabilitate people who have made poor choices, but it's still not the best idea to have it done at RCC. I believe a program like this should not be secluded but in a safer environment for students and the general public."

Aiya-Oba favored inclusiveness, "The greatest good is the good of all," the professor said.

The writer is a journalism student at RCC.